

**REMARKS**

Claims 1 - 37 are pending in the present application, of which claims 1 - 3, 14, 26, 27, 28 and 33 have been amended. New claims 38 and 39 have been added. No new matter has been added. Applicants believe that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated November 4, 2002.

**35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph, Rejection:**

Claims 1 - 37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claims 1, 2, 3, 14, 26, 27, 28 and 33 obviates the rejection of claims 1 - 37 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 3, 14, 26, 27, 28 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is respectfully solicited.

**As To The Merits:**

As to the merits of this case, the Examiner relies on the newly cited reference of Nakamura, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,068,213) in setting forth the following rejections:

claims 1-27, 31, 32, 36 and 37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Watanabe (of record) in view of Sukegawa et al. (of record) and Nakamura, et al.; and

claims 28-30, 33, 34 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Watanabe in view of Sukegawa et al., Bradley et al. (of record) and Nakamura, et al.

Each of these rejections are respectfully traversed.

With regard to the newly added claim features concerning the passport transaction apparatus connected to a financial institution such as a bank or a credit card company that executes an authentication of the applicant, and the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication, the Examiner takes the following position:

Watanabe does not disclose that the passport transaction apparatus is connected to a financial institution such as a bank or credit card company that executes an authorization of the passport applicant, and that the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication, but it is standard procedure to have purchasing apparatus connected to a financial apparatus, such as a credit card company, that executes an authentication of the applicant, and that the transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on the result of the authentication, as taught by Nakamura (column 1, lines 5 - 62).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Please see, the bridging paragraph between pages 7 and 8 of the Action.

However, the Examiner's characterization of Nakamura is incorrect. That is, Nakamura is not concerned with connecting to a financial institution which executes an authentication of the applicant, and identifies an applicant based on a result of the authentication.

Instead, according to Nakamura:

The data terminal device is utilized by the operator to check out the items purchased by the customer. The card reader is utilized by the customer to read an identification number encoded on the card in checking the identity of the customer, ... A keyboard on the card reader is also utilized by the customer to insert a secret identification number which is compared by the data processing unit with the identification number read from the card which will match if the customer is the true owner of the card.<sup>2</sup>

From the above, it is clear that the authentication in Nakamura is being performed in the data terminal device and not by connecting to a financial institution, as called for in each of the independent claims.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that even if Watanabe, Sukegawa, Bradley and Nakamura may partially disclose the present invention, none of these references teach or disclose how these references are combined, and the present invention is not obvious, because even the person skilled in the art could not combine these references so easily. That is, the features of the amended claims are not disclosed in the cited references even if they are combined.

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<sup>2</sup>Please see, lines 7 - 20, column 2 of Nakamura.

Further, from a different point of view, the passport transaction apparatus in the present invention communicates with a plurality of host computers, and carries out authentication, handling payment procedure from the account, and issuing procedure of the passport, while in Watanabe, Sukegawa, Bradley and Nakamura, the peripheral apparatus communicates only one host computer.

In other words, the applied references of Watanabe, Sukegawa, Bradley and Nakamura, singly or in combination, fail to disclose or fairly suggest the features of newly added independent claims 38 and 39.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, the claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. §1.111  
February 24, 2003

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/199,566

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Enclosures: Version with markings to show changes made

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**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE 09/199,566**

Claims 1 - 3, 14, 26, 27, 28 and 33 have been amended to read as follows:

1. (Four Times Amended) A passport transaction apparatus connected to a residents database storing therein identification data of the residents and also connected to a center which executes an examination for issuance of passports through a communication line, said apparatus comprising:

a communication unit for communicating with said center;

an image input unit for inputting an image of [the] an applicant for a passport;

a display unit for displaying a guidance for the procedure for the passport transaction;

a data input unit for inputting data for the application according to the procedure for passport transaction displayed on said display unit;

a sign input for inputting a sign of the applicant; and

a control section for transmitting the data inputted by each of said input units to said center by using said communication unit and orchestrating said center so as to determine whether the applied for passport is to be issued or not based on the identification data for the applicant which has been recorded in said resident data base and on each of the transmitted input data;

wherein the passport transaction apparatus is connected to a financial institution [such as a bank or a credit card company] that executes an authentication of the applicant, and that the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication.

2. (Three Times Amended) A passport transaction apparatus connected through a communication line to a center which executes an examination for issuance of passports as well as to a residents database which stores identification data of residents for providing services for issuing passports to applicants, said apparatus comprising:

a communication unit for communicating with said center and with said residents database;

an image input unit for inputting an image of an applicant for a passport;

a display unit for displaying a guidance for the procedure for the passport transaction;

a data input unit for inputting data for the application according to procedure for passport transaction displayed on said display unit;

a sign input unit for inputting a sign of the applicant; and

a control section for transmitting the data inputted by each of said input units and the identification data of the applicant fetched using said communication unit to said center by using said communication unit and orchestrating said center so as to determine whether the passport is to be issued or not based on the transmitted data;

wherein the passport transaction apparatus is connected to a financial institution [such as a bank or a credit card company] that executes an authentication of the applicant, and that the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication.

3. (Three Times Amended) A passport transaction apparatus connected to a center which provides the data for issuance of a certificate for an applicant and executes examination for issuance of passports for processing passport transactions through communication with the center via a communication line, said apparatus comprising:

a communication unit for communicating with said center;

an image input unit for inputting an image of the applicant;

a display unit for displaying a guidance for the procedure for the procedure for the passport transaction;

a data input unit for inputting data for passport transaction according to the procedure displayed on said display unit;

a printer unit for printing the image inputted by the image input unit and contents of the passport on a passport paper prepared previously;

an issuer unit for issuing a passport obtained by printing with said printer unit; and

a control unit for controlling the communications by said communication unit, image input by said image input unit, display by said display unit, data input by said data input unit and issuance of a passport by said issuer unit;

wherein said control unit sends the data inputted by each of said input units to said center using said communication unit and orchestrates said center so as to determine whether the passport is to be issued or not, and when it is determined that the passport is to be issued, makes the printer unit print the image of the applicant inputted by said image input unit and contents of the passport onto a passport paper prepared previously, and makes the issuer unit issue the passport obtained by printing;

wherein the passport transaction apparatus is connected to a financial institution [such as a bank or a credit card company] that executes an authentication of the applicant, and that the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication.



14. (Three Times Amended) A passport transaction apparatus for processing passport transactions with a storage medium which stores the data required for issuance of passports and the data for identifying [the] applicants for passports, said apparatus comprising:

- an image input unit for inputting an image of the applicant;
- a reader unit for reading out the data from said storage medium;
- a display unit for displaying a guidance for the procedure for the passport transaction;
- a data input unit for inputting data for passport transactions according to the procedure for passport transaction displayed on said display unit;
- a printer unit for printing an image inputted by said image input unit and the contents of the passport onto a passport paper previously prepared;
- an issuer unit for issuing a passport obtained by printing with said printing unit;
- a control unit for controlling the communications by said communication unit, image input by said image input unit, display by said display unit, reading by said reader unit, data input by said data input unit and issuance of a passport by the issuing unit;

wherein said control unit determines whether the applied passport is to be issued or not based on the data read out by said reading unit, and when it is determined that the passport is to be issued, prints the image of applicant inputted by said image input unit and the contents of the passport previously printed onto a passport paper using the printing unit and issues the passport obtained by printing using the issuing unit; and

wherein the passport transaction apparatus is connected to a financial institution [such as a bank or a credit card company] that executes an authentication of the applicant, and that the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication.

26. (Three Times Amended) A passport transaction method applicable to a system in which a system is connected via a communication line to a center for providing data for issuance of a certificate to an applicant and executing examination for issuance of a passport for processing passport transactions via communication with the center, said method comprising:

a first step of inputting data for checking an applicant;

a second step of accessing said center and determining whether the applied for passport is to be issued or not by using the data inputted in the first step;

a third step of inputting, when it is determined in the second step that the applied for passport is to be issued, an image of the applicant; and

a fourth step of printing the image of the applicant and contents of description on the passport for inputting in the third step onto passport paper previously prepared, and issuing the passport obtained by printing;

wherein the passport transaction apparatus is connected to a financial institution [such as a bank or a credit card company] that executes an authentication of the applicant, and that the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication.

27. (Four Times Amended) A passport transaction method applicable to a system for processing passport transactions with a storage medium storing therein data required for issuance of passports as well as data for identifying applications for passports comprising:

a first step of reading out data required for issuance of a passport from the storage medium and data for identifying an applicant;

a second step of determining whether the applied for passport is to be issued or not according to the data read out in the first step;

a third step of inputting, when it is determined in the second step that the applied for passport is to be issued, an image of the applicant; and

a fourth step of printing the image of the applicant and contents of description on the passport inputted in the third step and issuing the passport obtained by printing;

wherein the passport transaction apparatus is connected to a financial institution [such as a bank or a credit card company] that executes an authentication of the applicant, and that the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication.

28. (Five Times Amended) A passport transaction system comprising:
- a center accessibly connected to a first database storing therein data for issuing certificates to applicants, registering data for issuance of passports in a second database, and executing examination for issuance of passports; and
  - at least one passport transaction apparatus connected via a communication line to said center for processing passport transactions by communicating with said center; wherein said passport transaction apparatus comprises
    - a communication unit for communicating with said center;
    - an image input unit for inputting an image of the applicant for a passport;
    - a display unit for displaying a guidance for the procedure for passport transaction;
    - a data input unit for inputting data for passport transaction according to the contents of procedure displayed on the display unit;

a printer unit for printing the image inputted by the image input unit and contents of description on the passport onto a passport paper previously prepared;

an issuer unit for issuing the passport obtained by printing with said printer unit; and

a control unit for controlling the communications by said communication unit, image input by said image input unit, display by said display unit, data input by said data input unit and issuance of a passport by said issuer unit; while the control unit accesses the center using the communication unit, asks the center to make determination as to whether the applied for passport is to be issued or not according to the data inputted by the data input unit, and when it is determined that the applied for passport is to be issued, has an image of the applicant inputted by the image input unit and contents of description of the passport printed onto passport paper previously prepared and the passport obtained by printing issued with the issuing unit; and the center verifies the data inputted by the data input unit according to a request from the passport transaction apparatus to the first and second databases respectively by the way of communication with the communication unit and returns a reply as to whether each applied for passport is to be issued or not according to a result of verification;

wherein the passport transaction apparatus is connected to a financial institution [such as a bank or a credit card company] that executes an authentication of the applicant, and that the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication.

33. (Three Times Amended) A passport transaction system comprising:

a first center having a first database with data required for issuance of certificates for applicants registered therein;

a second center for registering data for issuance of passports in a second database and also executing examination for issuance of passports; and

at least one passport transaction apparatus each connected via a communication line to the first and second centers for processing passport transactions for communicating with the first and second centers; wherein said passport transaction apparatus comprises:

- a communication unit for communicating with the first and second centers;
- an image input unit for inputting an image of an applicant for a passport;
- a display unit for providing guidance with displays of contents of procedure for passport transactions;

- a data input unit for inputting data for passport transactions according to the contents of procedure displayed on the displayed unit;

- a printing unit for printing the image inputted by the image input unit and contents of description of the passport onto passport paper previously prepared;

- an issuing unit for issuing a passport obtained by printing with the printing unit;

- a control unit for providing controls over communication by the communication unit, image input by the image input unit, displays by the display unit, data input by the data input unit, and issuance of passports by the issuing unit; while the control unit accesses the first and second centers respectively using the communication unit, verifies an applicant for a passport according to the data inputted with the data input unit, makes determination as to whether an applied for passport is to be issued or not, and when it is determined that the applied for passport is to be issued, has the image of the applicant inputted by the image input unit and contents of

description on the passport printed with the printing unit onto passport paper previously prepared and also has the passport obtained by printing issued with the issuing unit;

the first center verifies the data inputted by the data input unit according to a request for verification of an applicant for passport from the passport transaction apparatus to the first database by way of communication with the communication unit and returns a reply according to a result of verification as to whether the applicant is the person he claims to be or not; and

the second center verifies the data inputted by the data input unit according to a request from the passport transaction apparatus by way of communicating with the communication unit to the second database and returns a reply according to a result of verification as to whether the applied for passport is to be issued or not;

wherein the passport transaction apparatus is connected to a financial institution [such as a bank or a credit card company] that executes an authentication of the applicant, and that the passport transaction apparatus identifies the applicant based on a result of the authentication.